

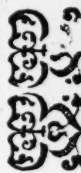
Sundrye strange and inhumaine Murthers, lately committed.

The first of a Father that hired a man to kill three of his children neere
to Ashford in Kent:

The second of master Page of Plymoth, murdered by the consent of his
owne wife : with the strange discouerie of sundrie other murthers.

Wherein is described the odiousnesse of murther,
with the vengeance which God insli-
ceth on murtherers.

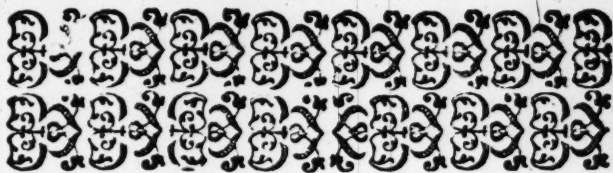




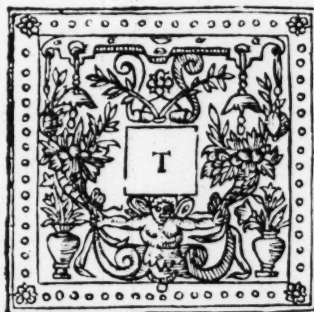
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A declaration of the monstrous crueltie of a Father
that hired one to murder three of his
owne children.



The heauie sentence that
almighty God pronounced
vpon the paricide Caine,
when hee saide, Thou art
cursed from the earth, that
hath opened her mouth to
receiue thy brothers blood
from thy hand, Ge 4. shew
eth how odious murder is
in his sight. It therfore be-
houeth euerie one to haue
a special care what actions

wee commit, not seeking to murder those that haue in
some sorte offended vs, but to leaue, as wee ought, the re-
uenge of all wrongs vnto the Lord: for we may be assured
we cannot deale colourable with God, as Pilate thought
to haue done when he pronounced sentence against his owne
conscience, for hee hauing at the importunate sute of the
Iewes pronounced death vpon our sauiour Christ, thought
to haue washed away the fault with the washing of his
handes and his protestation, in saying I am innocent of
the bloude of this iust person, Whereby indeed he
could not cleere himselfe, but according to the saying of Cr-
asmus. In murder the consentor is as euill as the deed
doer. So Pilates conscience made him guiltie of Christs

Cruell murderers

death, for which the wrath of God still followed him: for after that time Pilate in executing his office did nothing but that which was iniustice. And beeing thereof accused in Rome, he was by the Emperour Caligula banished, and went to Lions, the place (as some saie) of his birth, though griefe of which disgrace, by the sufferance of God, he desperately slew himselfe, that hee might die by the hand of the most wickedst person that liued. God sayd vnto Caine, The voice of thy brothers blood crieth vnto me out of y^e ground. And Plutarch dooth describe many straunge discoueries of murders, among which hee sayth, that a monstrous sonne slew his owne father, the act being so much against nature, as no man suspected this gracelesse childe for the same, and yet in his owne conscience hee saue millions of accusers standing before him: & readie (as he thought) to attach him for the same, inso much as vpon a daie sitting in a Tauerne with a companion of his, he sodainly thrust his sword by into the chimney, and cried out, saying, Ah you villaine swallowes, quoth hee, leaue your babling and exclaimeing that I slew my father, or I will doe by you as I did by him. His companion hearing this his voluntarie accusation, secretly betrayed the matter to the magistrate, whereby the vngacious sonne was soone apprehended, and executed according to his demerites.

Horror and feare alwayes accompanieth the murderer, his owne conscience is to him a thousand witnesses, he standeth in decade of euerie bush, beast and birde, he unagineth that euery thing discouereth his euill, and many times it falleth out, that the silly creatures of the earth detecteth him.

O what a strange and vnlooked for discouerie was this, yet nothing strange considering the horrour of the filthy fact. God seldome or neuer leaueth murder unpunished, nor will the marke of murder goe forth of the murderers weapon, neither can murder bee kept so close, but that by one meanes or other the Lord will compell the murderer to discouer and laie open the truth vnto the world,

as

lately committed.

as by this lamentable accident following manifestlie appeareth.



In the Towne or Parish of Warborne, within foure miles of Ashford market, being within the Countie of Kent, dwelled one Lincolne, the vnnaturall father of foure vnfortunate children. This man being about fiftie yeres of age was a widower, and therefore became a sutor to a widow not farre from thence, who being of some reasonable wealth, refused to marrie with him, in respect of his great charge of children. Whereat, as it seemeth, the deuill entered so farre into his minde, that he cast many wayes in his thought how to make them awaie, and returning home late downe in great heavinesse by the fire side. Whereupon he hauing a married man that wozought with him in his house, demanded of him why hee was so pensue, who requiring him also to sit downe by the fire, tolde him that he could not be merrie. Why (sayd he) howe comes it that you marrie not some honest woman to comfort you, considering you haue wherewithall to keepe her. Sh sayde he (fetching a great sigh) there is none wyll haue me, in respect of my great charge of children, but, sayd he, if I could make them awaie by anie meanes, I coulde marrie with a rich widowe. And thereupon (as it was since confessed) none being present but themselves, the sayd Lincolne perswaded this labouring man to persourne his request, and to take this matter in hand, so should he haue fortie shillings in money and a good cowe for his paines. But the poore man notwithstanding he seemed at the first vnwilling, yet as he was poore, so hee was couetous, and the hope of the money and the cowe so wozought in his thought, that forgetting God and all godlynes, in the ende without anie greate delaie he consented to the fact, and the rather hee was induced thereunto, for that this vnnaturall father promised, that when the murder was committed, not to pursue or make after him for the same, and that if hee

Cruell murders

were compelled thereunto, yet woulde he deale in such sort, that he would let fall his iure, rather than to take his oath, to saie he was the murderer. Thus concluding betweene themselves, the daie came wherein the wicked act was performed, which was vpon a later daie in Nouember last, on which morning, the father and all his children with the murderer broke their fast at home together. That done, olde Lincolne prepared himselfe to goe to Ashford market, which he did, taking his eldest sonne with him and the murderer, they departed towards Ashford: but in the waie the murderer returned home againe to the thre innocent children, whome he speedily murdered, knocking them on the heads with a hatchet, and cutting all their throates. The father the better to colour his vnnaturall consenting to the death of his owne children, bought thre paire of new shoes for them, whom he knew shoulde bee murdered before hee came home, and sent his eldest sonne home before, bearing about fiftene peeces olde, who could not get in at the doore which was barred on the inner side, & being hee heard none of the children stirring. Aaide there vntil his father came, who seeing no light, nor hearing of the children, contrarie to his vsuall custome, (yet might haue gone in on the backe side) came to his next neighbours house, and prayed that some bodie would goe home with him to see what had happened. In conclusion hee came home with companie, who were eie witnesss of this tragicall spectacle, for hauing entered the house, they found murdered two pretie boyes and a girle: which grieuous and vnexpected sight made the beholders to stand amazed, neuerthelesse the harde hearted father made no signe of sorrowe for them, neither woulde he take meanes to pursue the murderer, which by the reporte of his neighbours seemed to bee his man, who onelie was seene about the house after his departure and none else. But this wretched man commended him to bee a verie honest fellow, and therefore supposed his eldest sonne to bee the authoꝝ of this murder, and vpon him woulde willinglie haue imposed the same.

The

lately committed.

The next daie following the Father woulde seeke no meanes to burie the children, nor that the crowner should view them, but suffered them most unnaturallie to lie above the ground for the space of thre daies, untill a Gentlewoman named mistres West came and reprooved him of his unnaturall dealings towardes them, which done, hee digged a hole in the house about two foote deepe, and layde them in it, but by reason of springs in the ground, the water issued into the pit, and therby soaked the childrens wounds and bodie, and made them verie clere and white. Within five dayes after the Crowner came thether, having procured thereunto, and founde the children couered with a litle earth and a boord ouer them, whome he caused to bee taken vp. This was the eight daie after the murther was committed, in which time the murtherer was apprehended and accused thereof, but he utterly denied the fact. But being brought before the dead bodies of the children, the Father being there also, the woundes began to blæde afresh, which when the Crowner sawe, hee commanded the partie apprehended to looke vpon the children, which hee did, and called them by their names, wherevpon, behold the wonderfull workes of God, for the fact being still denied, the bodies of the children, which seemed white like vnto soaked flesh laid in water, sodainly receiued their former colour of bloude, and had such a lively countenance flushing in theyr faces, as if they had bene liuing creatures lying asleepe, which in deede blushed on the murtherers. When they wanted grace to blush and bee ashamed of theyr owne wickednesse. Which wonderfull miracle caused the murtherer there present not onely to confesse and acknowledge himselfe guilty of that damnable deede, but also to accuse the Father of the children as principal procurer of their vntimely deaths. Wherevpon they were both sent prisoners to Canterbury, where they remained untill the last Assizes holden at Newnoke in Kent eightene miles from London, where they were arraigned and condemned to die for the same, so that vpon the seauen and twentieth daie of february last past they

Cruell murthers

they were both executed nere to Ashford, where the father of the childzen confessed himselfe guiltie of þe murther, hauing before denied it euen till the houre of death. Whereby appeareth that his owne conscience was overcharged with this foule and odious offence, and therfore would not suffer it to be concealed.

Thus may you see howe murderers are ouertaken, and their actions opened by themselves, yea if there were no body to accuse the murtherer, the murdered coarſe wold giue euidence against him. It hath bene a meane appointed by the Lord to discern the murtherer, that when hee approached, the dead carcasſe wold at some issue or other blader many haue by this miraculous worke of the Lord bene discovered, when the prooſe hath bene onely bare ſuſpition. This example inſuing is much to that purpose.

There was not long ſince at Tappingham in Rutlandeſhire, a ſhoemaker that had murdered a yong man, who was buried, and the murtherer little ſuſpected for the ſame: neuertheles vpon bare ſuſpition he was apprehended, and the dead coarſe digged vp againe, before whom this ſhoemaker was brought, vpon whoſe approche the murdered coarſe not only bled, but with one of his eyes ſtanding wide open, he ſtared vpon the ſhoemaker that murdered him. The ſtanders by wonderfully amazed thereat, remoued the ſhoemaker, and preſently the eye closed vp, and being brought againe, the coarſe with his eye wide open, ſtared vpon him as before, as who wold ſaie, this is the murtherer, ſlay him, my blood asketh for vengeance. I haue here publiſhed this matter vpon ſuch due proſe as cannot be reſpued, it is not yet long ſince the murtherer was executed at Dukam in the foresayd Countie. An example of great terrour to ſuch as delight in blood. But what may examples preuaile where grace and the feare of God is wanting, as appeareth by the ſequels.

Of late there was dwelling in Salisburie a yong damſell named Alice Shepheard, who being with childe, and yet neuer married, wold ſwear when ſhe was charged therewith that

lately committed.

that it was most untrue: but the time coming on to which she should be deliuered, she was constrained to reueale the trueth to her Mother and Grandmother, who presently fetched a Midwife, making none other acquainted therewith, neither did she after her coming stay very long, befoze this maid was deliuered of a man childe, whose neck they presently broke and secretly buried it in the Churchyard, thinking thereby to escape worldly punishment: not fearing the wrath of God for their wilfull murder, nor considering that he saw the secrets of their hearts, nor that he would not suffer innocent blood shed to go unpunished. But now see the will and wonderfull work of almighty God to reueale this most wicked act. It happened a dog came ouer the place where the childe lay buried, and hauing found the scent of the flesh, he neuer rested untill he had with his snout scraped it vp out of the ground: leauing it bare about the earth. whereby it seemeth that they buried it but very shallowe, and was fearfull to be espied, least the fact should thereby be discovered. Now when the dog had laide it open to the eye of eche passenger, it happened that one Hugh Mawdes of Salisbury coming by, chanced to spee the same, and was greatly amazed to see so græuous a sight, who presently went and tolde the maiſters of the parrishe what he had seen, wherupon they came to behold this græuous sight, which they perceiued was but new bozn, and therefore concluded that it was the childe of some strumpet, and that she had murdered it, and then buried it in that shallowe place, which down it was conuayed into our Lady church in Salisbury, where all the chæfe of the towne came in and gaue their censures for finding out the unnatural mother and murderer therof.

Among whom mistris Shepheards daughter was nominated and greatly suspected for the same: notwithstanding, vpon this bare suspicion, the suspected person with her Mother, Grandmother and Midwife was sent for,

Cruell murders

who being examined befoze a Justice, confessed that the said childe was still bozne, and that therfoze they priuily buried it in that sozt: wherupon the Justice caused them to be sworne vpon a booke that they had said nothing but the trueth, which they seuerally did. But hee God shewed a miracle befoze them all, for they hauing taken their othes befoze the Justice, they were discharged and sent away, not meaning to deale any further therin.

But the Midwife being touched in conscience with her othe which she had then newe taken, going sozth of the Justices doores, suddenly fetcht a great sigh and said: Oh what a wicked woman am I to sweare that y^e childe was still bozne, when in troth it was bozne a line: which wordes being ouer hard by one of the Justices seruants, they were all called in againe: where they were charged with the murdering of the said childe, which after a saint Deniall, they generally confessed. Then were they committed to prison vntil the last assises, where they receiued the doome of iudgement by death, which of due tye they had deserved for so wicked a dæde. Thus we see that although God suffer the murderer to escape for a time, yet doth he followe them with so sharpe reuenge, as either they desperatlye slay themselves, or reape such shame as the world may be satisfied, that God hath dealt iustlye with them.

FINIS.

A true

*A true discourse of a cruel and inhumaine murder, committed vpon M. Padge
of Plymouth, the 11. day of February last, 1591.
by the consent of his owne wife, and
sundry other.*

In the Towne of Testock 10. miles or therabouts from
Plymouth, there dwelled one *M.* Glanfeeld, a man of
as good wealth and account, as any occupier in that Coun-
trie. This *M.* Glanfeeld fauoured a yong man named
George Strangwich, who was of such great credit with
him, that he turned ouer al his wares, shop and dealings
into his handes: and tooke so good liking of him being a
proper yong man, that it was supposed he should haue
had his daughter in marriage, and the rather for that he
had learned the full perfection & knowledge of his trade
in London, in the seruice of a woꝛshipfull Cittizen called
M. Powell in Bed-streæt, and grew so painfull, and ser-
ued so good a husband as the said *M.* Glanfeelds Daugh-
ter did wholye resolute that the saide Strangwidge should
be her husband and no other: whereto in troth her pa-
rentes neuer did condescend. But Sathan who is the
authoꝛ of euill, crept so farre into the dealinges of these
persons, that he procured the parents to mislike of Strang-
widge, and to perswade their Daughter to refraine his
companye, shewing her that they had found out a moze
mæter match for her, and mocioned vnto hir that it was
their pleasures she should marrye one *M.* Padge of
Plymouth, who was a widdower, and one of the chiefeest
inhabitants of that towne, and by reason that the sayde
M. Glanfeeld did mean to abide at Plymouth, he thought
it a moze sufficient matche to marrye her in Plymouth,
where she might be hard by him, then to marrye her to
Strangwidge who dwelt farre from him: In the end such
was the successe, that although she had settled her affecti-
on altogether vpon Strangwidge, yet through the per-
suasion of her frændes though soze against her will, she

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was married to **H.** Padge of **Wimouth**, notwithstanding that she had protested neuer to loue y man with her hart, no; neuer to remoue her affection settled vpon the saide **Stranguidge**, which she perfourmed as the sequell maketh manifest: for this mistris Padge had access to **Stranguidge**, and he to her at his comming to **Wimouth**: wherby the diuell so wrought in the harts of them both, that they practised daye and night how to bying her husband to his end. And therupon the said mistris Padge as appæreth since by her own confession, did within y space of one yære and lesse, attempt sundry times to poison her husband, for it was not full a yære, but that she had procured him to be murdered, as you shal hear immediatly.

But God who perseueth many persons from such perils and dangers, defended still y said **H.** Padge from the secret snares & practises of present death, which his wife had laid for him, yet not without great hurt vnto his body, for still the poison wanted force to kil him, so wonderfully did almighty God worke for him, yet was he compelled to vomit blood and much corruption, which doubtles in the end would haue killed him, and that shortlye. But to prosecute and that with great speed to perfourm this wicked & inhumain act, the saide mistris Padge and **Strangwidg** omitted no opportunitie: they wanted no meanes nor frænds to perforce it for their money, wherof they had good store, and moze then they knewe how to imploy, except it had bene to better bles: for she on the one side practised with one of her seruants named **Robert Widdis**, whom as she thought nothing would moze sooner make him pretend the murdering of his maister the silver and gold, wherewith she so corrupted him, with promise of seauenscore pounds moze, that he solemnly vnder took and vowed to perforce the task to her contentment.

On the other side **Strangwidg** hired one **Tom Stone** to be an actor in this tragicall action, and promised him a great summe of money for perfourming the same, who by a solempne

lately committed.

a solemne vow had graunted the effecting thereof, though to the hazard of his own life.

These two instruments wickedly prepared themselves to effect this desperate and villanous deed vpon the 11. of February being wednesday, on which night following the act was committed, but it is to be remembred that this mistris Wadge lay not then with her husband, by reason of the vntimely birth of a child wherof she was newly deliuered, the same being dead bozne: vpon which cause, she then kept her chamber, hauing befoze swozn y she would neuer beare child of his getting y should prosper: which argued a most vngodlye minde in the woman, for in that sort she had ben the death of two of her own children.

About ten of the clock at night M. Wadge being in his bed slumbring, could not happen vpon a sound slepe, and lying nusing to him selfe, Tom Stone came softlye and knocked at y dore, wher vpon Widdis his companion did let him in. who was made priue to this deed, and by reason that mistris Wadge gaue the straight charge to dispatche it that night whatsoeuer came of it, they drew towards the bed, intending immediatly to go about it, M. Wadge being not a slep as is also said, asked who came in, wher at Widdis leapt vpon his maister being in his bed, who roused himself and got out vpon his fete, & had ben hard enough for his man, but that Stone flew vpon him being naked, and suddenlye tripped him, so that he fell to the ground: wher vpon both of them fell vpon him, and tooke the kercher from his head, and knitting the same about his neck, they immediatly stifled him: And as it appereth euen in y anguish of death, the said M. Wadge greatly laboured to pul y kercher from about his neck, by reason of the marks & scratches which he had made with his nailes vpon his throat, but therw he could not preuaile, for they would not let slip their hold until he was full dead. This done, they laid him ouerthwart y bed, and against the bed side broke his neck, and when they sawe he was surelye dead, they stretched him and layde him in his bed again,

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spreading the clothes in ordinary sort, as though no such act had bene attempted, but that he had died on Gods hand.

Wherupon Iridis immediatly went to Mistris Pargess Chamber and tolde her that all was dispatcht: and about one hower after he came againe to his Mistris chamber dore and called aloud, mistresse quoth he, let some body look into my Pailfers chamber, me thinke I heare him grone, with that she called her maide, who was not priuie to any thing, and bad her light a Candle, wherevpon she slipt on her petticoate and went thether likewise, sending her maid first into the chamber, where she her selfe stode at the dore, as one whose conscience would not permit her to come and beholde the detestable deed which she had procured.

The maid simply felt on her Pailfers face, and found him colde and stiffe and so tolde her mistresse, wherat she bad the maide to warme a cloth and wrap it about his feete, which she did, and when she felte his legges, they were as colde as claye: wherat she cried out saying, her maister was dead.

Wherbpon her mistris got her to bed, and caused her man Iridis to goe call her ffather M. Glanfeeld, then dwelling at Plimouth, and sent for one of her husbands sisters likewise, willing her to make haste if euer she would see her brother aliue, for he was taken with the disease called the Pull as they tearme it in that Country: these persons being sent for, they came immediatly, wherat mistris Badge arose, & in counterfeit manner sounded, whereby there was no suspition a long time concerning any murder perourmed vpon him, vntill mistris Harris his sister spied blood about his bosome, which he had with his nailes procured by scratching for the Bercher when it was about his thyoate: then they moued his head, and found his neck broken, & on both his knees the skin was beaten off, by strining with them to saue his life.

Mistris

lately committed.

Mistris Harris hereupon perceiuing how hee was made away, went to the Maior and the two shipfull of the towne, desiring them of Justice, and intreated them to come and beholde this lamentable spectacle, which they immediatly perfourmed, and by searching him, found that he was murdered the same night.

Upon this the Maior committed Pyddis to prison, who being examined, did impeach Tom Stone, shewing that he was a chiefe actor in the same: this Thomas Stone was married vpon the next daye after the murder was committed, and being in the midst of his iollity, suddenly he was attached and committed to prison, to beare his fellow company.

Thus did the Lord vnfold this wretched deed, where by immediatly the said mistris Wadge was attached vpon the murder: & examined befoze Sir Frauncis Drake Knight, with the Maior and other maiestrates of Plimouth, who denied not the same, but said she had rather dye with Strangwidge, then to liue with Wadge.

At the same time also the said George Strangwidge was newly come to Plimouth, being very heauy & doubtfull, by reason he had giuen consent to the saide murder: who being then in company w some of London, was apprehended, and called befoze the Justices for the same, whereupon at his comming befoze them, he confessed the trueth of all: and offered to proue that he had written a Letter to Plimouth befoze his comming thither, that at any hand they should not perfourme the act: neuertheles M. Wadge was murdered befoze the coming of this Letter, and therefore he was sent to prison with the rest vnto Exeter: & at the assises holden this last Lent, the said George Strangwidge, Mistris Wadge, Pyddis, and Tom Stone, were condemned and adiudged to dye for the saide fact, and were all executed accordingle vpon Satterdaye being the twentieth day of Februarie last,

1591.

other

Cruell murders

Other strange things-scene at that time.

Vpon the same night & thre nights after, there was
sæn an ugly thing foirmed like a Beare, whose eyes
were as it had bœn fier, bearing about him a linnen cloth
representing the instruement wherewith the saide Sp.
Badge was murdered.

Also in Plimouth the same wake in the presence of
sundry honest persons, was visibly sæne a Raven, which
did alight vpon the head of a Ships mast, sunk at the end
of the towne: this Raven standing vpon the top of the
maine mast, did with her talents pluck vp certaine rope
yarnes that hung downe from the head of the mast, and
fastned them about her necke, and often turnde them a-
bout her neck with all her foire, which done, she plunged
her selfe right down, clapping her wings close to her bo-
dy, and neuer left untill she had hanged her self.

Now the ship was all this while a ground, lying with
her sterne to the shoze, and suddainly the said ship turned
her selfe round, and brought her stem where earst her
sterne did lye, all which are strange, yet is the same so
true, as it cannot be dispoüed, being iustified by those
that saw the same.

The Lord blesse vs, and gine all other grace to bee
warned by these examples and inhumaine actions before
recited: that we may auoid the danger of shedding of in-
nocent blood, and feare the iudgement of God which con-
tinuallly followeth wilfull murderers. Eternal God pre-
serue this little Iland, blesse the Duernes Paierlie, and
her honourable counsell, turn thy wraath awaye from vs
O Lord, and poure downe thy blessings vpon her high-
nes, that she our Moyse, maye long lue to holde vp the
Tables of the Law in her gracious bandes, and that we
may seek continually to please her in such due sort, as she
may haue no iust cause to throw them down, which God
graunt for his mercie sake. Amen.

FINIS.

